Ar-Item 3/27/61

ISSUE WARRANT

FOR ARREST OF PROBE MYSTERY WOMAN

A warrant was issued today for the arrest of mystery girl Sandra Moffett (McMaines), who turned up in Omaha, Neb., and told newsmen there she did not attend a party the night President Kennedy's death allegedly was plotted in New Orleans.

Star prosecution witness Perry Russo named Miss Moffett as one of several persons who were in David Ferrie's apartment the night Russo says he heard Ferrie, Lee Harvey Oswald and Clay L. Shaw conspire to kill the President.

MARKETS FINAL SPORTS

Early this afternoon, Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's office swore out a warrant for the woman as a material witness. It was signed by trial Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr., who set bond at $5,000.

Presumably, the warrant will be forwarded to Omaha where Miss Moffett is now married to a part-time minister and furniture mover, 48-year-old Harold McMaines.

"We feel she is a very important witness," Asst. DA Andrew Sciambra declared this afternoon.

His words echoed the expression of Shaw's defense counsel, F. Irvin Dymond, who earlier told the States-Item he wants to question Mrs. McMaines.

"My opinion now is that she will be a very useful witness," Dymond asserted, indicating Mrs. McMaines would be subpenaed by the defense.

Discovered in Omaha by newsmen there, Mrs. McMaines, whose maiden name was Lilli Mae Moffett, acknowledged knowing Russo and said she had once been in love with him.

In other highlights of a two-hour taped interview with the Omaha World-Herald, Mrs. McMaines, now 22, said:

—She could not have attended a party at Ferrie's apartment prior to the Kennedy assassination because she was not introduced to him until 1965.

—She refused to accompany two Garrison investigators back to New Orleans after they called on her in Omaha March 8.

—She knew Perry Russo attempted suicide by slashing his wrists in 1965 and a friend named "Mike" took him to a hospital and "got him sewed up."

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Warrant Issued for Mystery Woman

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—She was acquainted with "Lefty" Peterson, another person whom Russo identified as attending the party which preceded what Russo said was the conspiratorial conversation among Ferrie, Oswald and Shaw.

Dymond expressed immediate interest in Mrs. McMaines' reference to Peterson. He said the defense had been trying to locate Peterson and added:

"We sure as hell want to talk with him."

EARLIER, a spokesman at District Attorney Jim Garrison's office refused to comment on why no warrant or subpena has been issued for Mrs. McMaines.

Asked if she would be subpenaed as a material witness, Asst. DA James R. Alcock replied:

"Stick around and maybe you'll find out the answer to that question."

Mrs. McMaines said she was "sort of a party girl" when she met Russo on Bourbon st. here four years ago. Later she met McMaines here and went with him to Omaha.

Mrs. McMaines said two men who identified themselves as Garrison investigators, Charles Joneau and Kent Simms, came to her Omaha home at 11:30 p. m. on March 8.

She said the men asked her to return to New Orleans with them "to look at photographs, but they didn't say what kind."

BOTH Mrs. McMaines and her husband said they were wary of Joneau and Simms because they "wouldn't answer questions."

She was offered new clothes and accommodations "at the best hotel in town" if she returned to New Orleans, the woman added.

Instead of returning with them, she and her husband retained an attorney the following day and paid a visit to the office of Douglas County (Neb.) Attorney Donald Knowles.

The Louisiana investigators were "real mad" when they learned the McMaines had gone to the local prosecutor, the Omaha residents said.

During an interview with the Douglas County attorney, the New Orleans men "told the county attorney the same thing they had told us about being legmen for Garrison," Mrs. McMaines recalled. "But they didn't say anything about buying us clothes."

The county attorney advised the McMaines they were not obligated to return to New Orleans so long as no charges had been filed against them, and the Garrison men left.

THE WOMAN who called herself Sandra Moffett in New Orleans met her husband here while he was in the city on what McMaines called a "sort of a vacation."

McMaines was quoted in the World-Herald as saying he first saw his wife in a New Orleans cafe last year.

"She was on skid row, and I took compassion on her," he added, explaining he has been a part-time minister at an Omaha church for the past several years.

Mrs. McMaines said she turned to religion and married the Omaha visitor "because he was the first guy that took me out and took me to a movie instead of a beer tavern."

Despite what they contend is their role as innocent bystanders in the Garrison investigation, Mr. and Mrs. McMaines said they have been injured as a result of their involvement.

M'MAINES said he lost a job with a moving firm because of publicity surrounding the visit of the New Orleans investigators.

Mrs. McMaines said she lost two jobs for the same reason but found work in a cleaning firm about a week ago. Both husband and wife denied reports they had been driven into hiding by the New Orleans case.

The British-French Concorde supersonic airliner is designed to carry 140 passengers and cover the Paris-New York route in 3½ hours at twice the speed of sound.